

Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

1. (cancelled)

2. (new) A method for intercepting and servicing selected requests of a software application running on a computer that uses an operating system and a local database to maintain configuration data to be accessed by programs running on the computer, without installation of the software application on the computer, which configuration data would normally include further configuration data of the software application, the method comprising:

providing one or more data repositories containing the further configuration data, not stored in the local database, comprising one or more registry keys;

combining the one or more data repositories with the local database;

intercepting selected requests of the software application; and

servicing the selected requests of the software application using the further configuration data provided in the one or more data repositories, so as to retrieve the further configuration data while running the software application.

3. (new) The method of claim 2, further comprising receiving at least one of the one or more data repositories and the software application by download over a network to run on the computer.

4. (new) The method of claim 2, wherein accessing the further configuration data comprises providing the further configuration data from the one or more data repositories in a manner that emulates access by the operating system to the local database, whereby the further configuration data are accessed in a manner transparent to the software application.

5. (new) The method of claim 2, wherein the operating system comprises a Windows operating system, and the local database comprises a Windows registry.

6. (new) The method of claim 2, wherein providing the one or more data repositories comprises collecting the further configuration data responsive to installation of the software application and/or operation of the software application.

7. (new) The method of claim 2, wherein the step of servicing the selected requests of the software application further comprises changing a value in the one or more data repositories.

8. (new) The method of claim 7, wherein upon termination of the running of the software application the one or more data repositories are saved, and the computer returns to its previous configuration as given by its local database.

9. (new) The method of claim 2 wherein the servicing step includes using an original handler to service one or more of the registry keys.

10. (new) A method for generating one or more data repositories for use in running a software application on a computer under an operating system that uses a local database containing configuration data to be accessed by programs running on the computer, which configuration data would normally include further configuration data of the software application, the method comprising:

performing at least one of installing and operating the software application;
monitoring and recording local database accesses by the software application;

and

writing at least one configuration data element generated during at least one of installation and operation to one or more data repositories.

11. (new) The method of claim 10, wherein the operating system comprises a Windows operating system, and the local database of the computer comprises a Windows registry, and wherein monitoring and recording local database accesses comprises hooking a registry service request to intercept selected requests made by the software application during at least one of installation and operation.

12. (new) The method of claim 11, wherein monitoring and recording local database accesses comprises hooking registry service requests to intercept all request made by the software application.

13. (new) The method of claim 10, further comprising:
combining the one or more data repositories with the local database , thereby allowing requests of the software application running on the computer to be selectively intercepted and serviced using the registry data from the one or more data repositories and allowing operation of the software application on the computer without installation.

14. (new) The method of claim 10 wherein the configuration data comprises one or more registry keys.

15. (new) The method of claim 10 further comprising the steps of:
writing the at least one registry data generated during at least one of installation and operation to both a location intended by the software application itself, and to a corresponding location in an emulation branch; and
saving the emulation branch to the one or more data repositories.

16. (new) The method of claim 10, wherein the operating system comprises a Windows operating system, and the database of the computer comprises a Windows registry, and wherein monitoring and recording local database accesses comprises customizing the local database to intercept and identify selected requests made by the software application during at least one of installation and operation.

17. (new) A computer apparatus having an operating system that comprises a local database containing configuration data to be accessed by programs running on the computer apparatus, which computer apparatus is adapted to utilize one or more data repositories containing further configuration data required by a software application, the further configuration data not stored in the local database comprising one or more

registry keys, the one or more data repositories combined with the local database, the computer apparatus adapted to run the software application under the operating system by intercepting selected requests made by the software application to access the local database and to service the request with items of the further configuration data from the one or more data repositories to the software application.

18. (new) The computer apparatus of claim 17, wherein the computer apparatus is adapted to intercept all requests made by the software application to access the local database.

19. (new) The computer apparatus of claim 17, wherein the operating system comprises a Windows operating system, and the local database comprises a Windows registry.

20. (new) The computer apparatus of claim 17, wherein the further configuration data comprises data that would normally be written to the local database in the course of at least one of installation and operation of the software application on the computer apparatus, and wherein the computer apparatus is adapted to run the software application substantially without installation, by using the further configuration data in the one or more data repositories.

21. (new) The computer apparatus of claim 17, wherein the software application changes one or more values in the one or more data repositories, while the software application is running.

22. (new) The computer apparatus of claim 21, wherein upon termination of the running of the software application the one or more data repositories are saved, and the computer apparatus returns to its previous configuration as given by its local database.

23. (new) A computer apparatus for running a software application under an operating system that uses a local database containing configuration data to be accessed

by programs running on the computer, which configuration data would normally include data generated during at least one of installation and operation of the software application on the computer apparatus, which computer apparatus is adapted to utilize one or more data repositories containing further configuration data of the software application, the further configuration data not stored in the local database comprising one or more registry keys, the one or more data repositories combined with the local database, the computer apparatus adapted to run the software application without the installation of the software application on the computer apparatus by intercepting and servicing selected requests for the further configuration data from the one or more data repositories instead of accessing the local database.

24. (new) The computer apparatus of claim 23, which is coupled to receive the one or more data repositories and the software application by download over a network, to run on the computer apparatus.

25. (new) The computer apparatus of claim 23, wherein the operating system comprises a Windows operating system, and the local database comprises a Windows registry.

26. (new) An apparatus for generating one or more data repositories for use in running a software application on a user computer under an operating system that uses a local database containing configuration data to be accessed by programs running on the user computer, which configuration data would normally include data generated during at least one of installation and operation of the software application on the user computer, the apparatus comprising:

a computer on which the software application is installed, which computer is adapted to monitor and record local database accesses by the software application, and to write registry data generated during at least one of installation and operation to the one or more data repositories.

27. (new) A computer software product for enabling a software application to run on a computer having an operating system that uses a local database containing

configuration data to be accessed by programs running on the computer, the computer software product comprising a computer-readable medium in which program instructions are stored, which instructions, when read by the computer, cause the computer to receive one or more data repositories containing further configuration data for the software application, required by the software application, the further configuration data not stored in the local database comprising one or more registry keys, the one or more data repositories combined with the local database, which instructions cause the computer to intercept selected requests by the software application to access the local database, so as to service the selected requests with an item of the further configuration data, responsive to the selected requests.

28. (new) The computer software product of claim 27, wherein the instructions cause the computer to intercept all requests by the software application to access the local database

29. (new) The computer software product of claim 27, wherein the operating system comprises a Windows operating system, and the local database comprises a Windows registry, and wherein the selected requests intercepted by the computer comprises a registry service request, which is hooked by the computer so as to identify one of the keys in the selected requests and to process the selected requests responsive to the identified key.

30. (new) A computer software product for enabling a software application to run on a computer without installation of the software application on the computer, under an operating system that uses a local database containing configuration data to be accessed by programs running on the computer, which configuration data would normally include further configuration data generated during at least one of installation and operation of the software application on the computer, the computer software product comprising a computer-readable medium in which program instructions are stored, which instructions, when read by the computer, cause registry requests of the software application to be selectively intercepted and serviced from one or more data repositories containing the further configuration data, the further configuration data not

stored in the local database comprising one or more registry keys, the one or more data repositories combined with the local database, which instructions cause the computer to access the further configuration data in the one or more data repositories instead of accessing the local database so as to retrieve the further configuration data while running the software application.

31. (new) The computer software product of claim 30, wherein the operating system comprises a Windows operating system, and the local database comprises a Windows registry.

32. (new) The computer software product of claim 31, wherein the software application changes a value in the one or more data repositories.

33. (new) The computer software product of claim 32, wherein upon termination of the running of the software application the one or more data repositories are saved, and the computer returns to its previous configuration as given by its local database.

34. (new) A computer software product for generating one or more data repositories for use in running a software application on a user computer under an operating system that uses a local database containing configuration data to be accessed by programs running under the operating system, which configuration data would normally include data generated during at least one of installation and operation of the software application, the product comprising:

a computer-readable medium in which program instructions are stored, which instructions, when read by a computer, cause the computer to monitor and record local database accesses by the software application, and to write registry data generated during at least one of installation and operation to the one or more data repositories.

35. (new) A method for running a software application on a computer having an operating system that uses a local database containing configuration data to be accessed by programs running on the computer, the method comprising:

providing one or more data repositories containing further configuration data of the software application required by the software application, the further configuration data not stored in the local database comprising one or more registry keys;

combining the one or more data repositories with the local database;

intercepting selected requests by the software application to access the local database; and

servicing the selected requests of the software application with an item of the further configuration data from the one or more data repositories, responsive to the selected requests.

36. (new) The method of claim 35, wherein intercepting comprises intercepting all requests by the software application to access the local database.

37. (new) The method of claim 35, wherein the local database comprises a hierarchical database having a tree structure that comprises a plurality of branches, and wherein providing the one or more data repositories comprises providing data corresponding to one or more branches of the tree structure that are used by the software application.

38. (new) The method of claim 37, wherein the operating system comprises a Windows operating system, and the local database comprises a Windows registry.

39. (new) The method of claim 38, wherein intercepting the selected requests comprises hooking a registry service request.

40. (new) The method of claim 39, wherein hooking the registry service request comprises identifying one of the keys in the request, and processing the request responsive to the identified key.

41. (new) The method of claim 38, wherein providing the one or more data repositories comprises loading the further configuration data from the one or more data repositories into the local database before running the software application.

42. (new) The method of claim 41, wherein upon termination of the running of the software application the one or more data repositories are saved, and the computer returns to its previous configuration.

43. (new) The method of claim 37, wherein intercepting the selected requests comprises making a determination whether the selected requests relates to one of the branches that contains only the further configuration data, or whether the selected requests relates to another of the branches that is shared with the local database, and processing the selected requests responsive to the determination.

44. (new) The method of claim 35, wherein intercepting the request by the software application comprises receiving a request to alter the further configuration data, and comprising altering the further configuration data in the one or more data repositories responsive to the selected requests.

45. (new) The method of claim 44, further comprising saving the one or more data repositories including the altered further configuration data upon termination of the software application, to be used in running the software application subsequently.

46. (new) The method of claim 35, wherein returning the item of the further configuration data comprises emulating access by the operating system to the local database, so that the selected requests is handled in a manner transparent to the software application.

47. (new) The method of claim 35, wherein the further configuration data comprise data that would normally be written to the local database in the course of at least one of installation and operation of the software application on the computer, and wherein running the software application comprises running the software application substantially without installation on the computer, by using the further configuration data in the one or more data repositories.

48. (new) A method for intercepting and servicing requests of a software application running on a computer that uses an operating system and a local database to maintain configuration data to be accessed by programs running on the computer, without installation of the software application on the computer, which configuration data would normally include further configuration data of the software application generated during at least one of the installation and operation of the software application on the computer, the method comprising:

providing one or more data repositories containing the further configuration data, not stored in the local database, comprising one or more registry keys;

intercepting selected requests of the software application; and

servicing the selected requests of the software application using the further configuration data provided in the one or more data repositories instead of accessing the local database, so as to retrieve the further configuration data while running the software application.

49. (new) The method of claim 48, wherein intercepting comprises intercepting all requests of the software application.

50. (new) A method for intercepting and servicing requests of a software application running on a computer that uses an operating system and a local database to maintain configuration data to be accessed by programs running on the computer, without installation of the software application on the computer, which configuration data would normally include further configuration data of the software application generated during at least one of the installation and operation of the software application on the computer, the method comprising:

providing one or more data repositories containing the further configuration data, not stored in the local database;

intercepting selected requests of the software application;

identifying the selected requests as a request for one or more elements from the further configuration data;

combining the one or more elements from the further configuration data with the local database; and

servicing the selected requests of the software application using the further configuration data.

51. (new) The method of claim 50, wherein intercepting comprises intercepting all requests of the software application.

52. (new) The method of claim 50, wherein intercepting the request by the software application comprises receiving a request to alter the further configuration data, and wherein servicing the request comprises altering the further configuration data in at least one of the one or more data repositories and the local database.

53. (new) The method of claim 52, further comprising saving the one or more data repositories including the altered further configuration data.

54. (new) The method of claim 50, further comprising removing from the local database, during or after the application termination, at least one element of the further configuration data that was combined with the local database.